

Pentecost 10, Proper 13
Church of the Good Shepherd, Silver City, NM

August 2, 2015
Rev. Paul Moore

Food for the Hungry

I love Jesus' play on words in today's Gospel lesson. "Your forefathers ate manna in the wilderness and died...I am the bread of life." It's rather presumptuous, don't you think? The Manna incident in the book of Exodus was one of those formative moments for the People of Israel. So important was it that God provided food in the wilderness that a pot of manna was to be kept in perpetuity in the Arc of the Covenant. God, the great deliverer, was not just one to act politically—to free a monarch's slaves, or economically—to give the underdogs a chance at life, but physically as well. God will provide food where there is none.

Jesus takes up that same motif. In the wake of feeding 5000 men, plus women and children (echoing and exceeding Elisha's miracle,) the people seek him out. Jesus calls their agenda. They don't want him, they want free lunch, but this isn't free lunch, this is the Kingdom. The God of Elisha is here in the person of Jesus. The God of Moses is here in the person of Jesus. Are you just after a free fish sandwich, or are you willing to live in the Kingdom? The Kingdom is where food is given and thirst is slacked.

The people of Honduras are hungry. Oh, they have food, it's not like last year where we saw hunger-related illness in almost every village. But they know what hunger is. I heard of times when the crops failed and people were reduced to cooking and eating any weed that would grow in the woods. Studies on hunger show that there is a deeper hunger. People hunger for food security. People hunger for health stability. People hunger for the good that they do not have. Ultimately, people hunger for God, the source of life on all and every level. If that is the case, then any effort that feeds them on any level has the potential of becoming for them a doorway into the kingdom. Whether it's vitamins, antibiotics, a word of council or a day of study, moving people toward the Kingdom is Kingdom work.

People in Silver City are hungry. Some are hungry in their stomachs, and we feed them with our food donations. Some are hungry for healthy society, and we love them as we are loved. Some are hungry for spiritual community, and we know the Spirit among us. Some do not know that they can eat Manna from heaven here. Let's go feed the hungry, shall we?